

LIVELIHOOD STRATEGY OF MUSAHAR COMMUNITY

(A Case Study of Ishworpur VDC, Sarlahi, Nepal)

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Recommendation Letter

The thesis entitled **Livelihood Strategy of Musahar Community: A Case Study of Ishworpur VDC, Sarlahi District, Nepal** has been prepared by **Mukund Kumar Ale** under my guidance and super vision. I hereby forward this thesis to the evaluation committee for final evaluation and approval.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled **Livelihood Strategy of Musahar Community: A Case Study of Ishworpur VDC, Sarlahi District, Nepal** submitted to the Central Department of Rural Development, Tribhuvan University, is entirely my original work prepared under the guidance and supervision of my supervisor. I have made due acknowledgements to all ideas and information borrowed from different sources in course of preparing this thesis. The results of this thesis have not been presented or submitted anywhere else for the award of any degree or for any other purposes. I assure that no part of the content of this thesis has been published in any form before.

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Abstract

Musahars are marginalized caste group people deprived of various basic facilities like education, health, communication, electricity and other services that are the essential factors for the development of the modern citizen. The present thesis **Livelihood strategy of the Musahar community: a case study of Ishworpur VDC, Sarlahi, District** is formulated according to the statement of the problems. The study is focused on the marginalized ethnic group of Musahar people and explores livelihood patterns of the Musahar community of Nepal. The main objectives of this thesis are: to describe socio-economic condition, to explore the traditional livelihood strategies and to find out the alternate livelihood strategies of Musahar community due to modernization. To get the objectives, 60 households were taken by using random sampling out of 290 households.

Conceptually livelihood connotes the means of activities entitlements and assets by which people make a living. It is related with both agriculture and non-agriculture sectors. The sources of livelihood of rural people are mainly through cash crops, horticulture, animal husbandry, dairy, poultry, piggery, fishery, organic farming- vermin compost, handicrafts, rural artisans, and non-timber forest products etc. which are also followed by the Musahar people of the study area. Dependence on wage labor, mostly of the unskilled and underpaid variety, is another important source of livelihood for majority of Musahar in the study area. Unskilled labors from Musahar community migrate to the urban center and in India for wage labor especially during lean agricultural periods. Musahars have lots of hardship and drudgery in their livelihood earning.

Musahar people of Ishworpur VDC practices multifarious strategies to maintain their livelihood. Such practices include wage labor, agriculture, animal husbandry, investment and saving. Agriculture, with lesser impact of modernization is yielded to wage-oriented agriculture. Animal husbandry, despite of any hybrid animals and sufficient land for shedding and cultivation is mounting up due to the developed market in nearby village. Transport goods loader, agricultural labors, Rajmistri, Janman, labor at factory and industry are the chief wage- related activities which are of utmost importance livelihood strategy of majority households of Musahars. Emigration to India, particularly to Delhi and Punjab, is increased which is much helpful to support their livelihood and the occupation is suffice to introduce them with outside world. The consumption of modern equipments like Motorcycle and car is totally not seen but the use of television; DVD, CD, VCD and mobile are increased with untapped electricity. The expenditure is below the poverty line which is, more precisely, less in education and health. With uneven income and sources for earning, the Musahar community might be the victim of social discrimination and the Musahar community people might be discriminated as haves and haves not group which might collapse the unity and cohesiveness of community in future. So, the Musahar community people are afflicted despite of some changes.

Research in Ishworpur VDC shows that historically Musahar people had their livelihood from landlord being Haruwa and Charuwa and migrating to India being agriculture based labors. But rapid urbanization and globalization pushed them in the transition providing both opportunities

and constraints. The household assets have undergone rapid modification. Now they have no option other than modifying the traditional occupation. Land fragmentation, change in social institution, resulted from the urbanization and globalization. The livelihood diversification and introducing of foreign employment have recently emerged livelihood strategies of the people in the study area. Due to the proximity to the market, the influence of the urbanization is more apparent in the Musahar Village. Most of the households follow the multiple occupations in the study area besides agriculture. The role of agriculture activities in their life is substantial.

The livelihood strategy of Musahar community in the study area is in transition. It shifted from agriculture to non-agricultural one. The household assets of this community have greatly influenced the process of adaptation of new strategy or modification of traditional occupation. Economic development and other economic activities changed the surrounding environment of the people of a particular area hence resulted change in their way of life to adopt with the changing environment.

Livelihood difficulty reflects on unprofitable farming activities or un-remunerative employment, which may not even allow the poor family to meet their basic needs. So, it is inevitable to identify and disseminate the effective livelihood strategy, especially, for the improvement of livelihood of Musahars. It is necessary to ensure access to resources and increase social and political participation of Musahar community for integral development of rural community in Nepal.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	Page No.
Declaration	i
Letter of Recommendation	ii
Approval Sheet	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
Acronyms/ Abbreviations	ix
Glossary	x
CHAPTER- I	1-6
INTRODUCTION	
Background of the Study	1-3
Statement of the Problem	4
Objectives of the Study	5
Importance of the Study	5
Limitation of the study	6
Organization of the study	6
CHAPTER-II	7-26
LITERATURE REVIEW	
Studies related to the Musahar Community	7-9
Sustainable Livelihood Approach	10-12

Framework	13-15
Vulnerability Context	16
Livelihood Assets	17
Change in Asset structure	17
Transforming Structure and Process	18
Livelihood Strategy	18
Livelihood Outcomes	19
Empirical Studies	
Studies Related to Livelihood Strategies	19-23
General Study Related with Different Caste/ Ethnicity	24-26

CHAPTER- III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design	27
Rational of the selection of the study area	27
Nature and Sources of Data	27
Sampling Procedure	28
Data Collection Techniques and Tools	28
Household Survey	28
Key Informant Interview	28
Observation	29
Method of Data Analysis	29

CHAPTER- IV **30-56**

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF SURVEY DATA

General Background of the Sarlahi District	30-33
Ishworpur VDC: A General Profile	33-36

The Musahar of Ishworpur VDC	36-37
Socio-economic status of Musahar people of Ishworpur VDC	37
Housing Pattern	37
Structure of Family	38
Age Composition	39
Language and Religions	39
Education	41
Health and Sanitations	42
Feast and Festivals	42
Food and Drinking Habit	42
Life Cycle Rites	43
Traditional Livelihood Strategies	45
Alternative Livelihood Strategies	45-46
Household Assets	
Human Capital	47
Physical Capital	49
Natural Capital	50-53
Social Capital	54-55
4.6.5. Financial Capital	56
CHAPTER-V	58-73
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	
SUMMARY	59-60
CONCLUSION	60-63
SUGGESTIONS	63-64

REFERENCES

65-68

APPENDIX-1 Survey Questionnaire of Livelihood Strategy of Musahar community

APPENDIX-2 Photographs and illustrations

List of Tables

Table No. 4.1 Ethnic Composition of Sarlahi District	32
Table No. 4.2 Distribution of Population and Household by Wards	34
Table No. 4.3 Ethnic Composition of Population of Ishworpur VDC	35-36
Table No. 4.4 Types of Musahar House	37
Table No. 4.5 Types of Family of the Household	38
Table No. 4.6 Population Distribution of Musahar on the Basis of Age and Sex	39
Table No. 4.7 Some Examples of Musahar Speaking Language	40
Table No. 4.8 Educational Status of Musahar in the Study Area	41
Table No. 4.9 Income level of Musahar people	44
Table No. 4.10 Traditional livelihood strategies	45
Table No. 4.11 Alternative livelihood strategies	46
Table No. 4.12 Person involving in wage labor	48
Table No. 4.13 HHs having communication facilities	50
Table No. 4.14 Landholding by household (kattha)	51
Table No. 4.15 Use of resources by households	52
Table No. 4.16 Household size	55

List of Figures

Figure No. 1 Sustainable Livelihood Framework	14
Figure No. 2 Sarlahi in a Nutshell	31

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CBS = Central Bureau of Statistics

CBO= Community Based Organization

CDRD=Central Department of Rural Development

DFID= Department for International Development

DVD= Digital Versatile Disc

HHs= Households

INGO= International Non- Government Organization

IRDP=Integrated Rural Development Program

Km= kilometer

NGO= Non Governmental Organization

No.= Number

OXFAM= Oxford Committee for Famine Relief

RDA= Rastriya Dalit Aayog

Regd.= Registration

SIDA= Swedish International Development Agency

TU= Tribhuvan University

TV= Television

UNDP= United Nations Development Program

VCD= Video Compact Disc

VDC= Village Development Committee